

VZCZCXRO4636
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #3301 2871406
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
P 131406Z OCT 08
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9926
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

S E C R E T BAGHDAD 003301

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/11/2018
TAGS: [POL](#) [PGOV](#) [EFIN](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: MUTHANNA: ARREST WARRANT ISSUED FOR PROVINCIAL
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

REF: 08 BAGHDAD 2785

Classified By: Classified by Team Leader Brad Lynch for reasons 1.4(b)
and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is a Muthanna PRT reporting cable.

SUMMARY

[1](#)2. (S) An arrest warrant was issued for Abdul Hussein Dhalimi, the Muthanna provincial council chairman, following an argument he had with a doctor at Samawah General Hospital. Verbally abusing a government employee can carry a penalty of up to two years in jail; however, this warrant was ignored by the Iraqi Police. Hakim Khazal Khashan, one of Dhalimi's political rivals, told the PRT Leader that he plans to have a Baghdad judge issue another warrant, one that he says cannot be ignored. The new warrant will include corruption charges based upon evidence Hakim claims to have given the federal judge. This appears to be an attempt by Hakim to publicly embarrass Dhalimi during the election campaign. END SUMMARY

THE CHARGES

[1](#)3. (SBU) A Samawah Hospital doctor filed charges against Abdul Hussein Dhalimi, the Muthanna provincial council chairman, claiming that he violated Section 229 of the Iraqi penal code. This portion of the law prohibits elected officials from physically or verbally assaulting government employees who are engaged in their official duties. If found guilty in a court of law, Dhalimi could face up to two years in prison.

WHAT THE VICTIM CLAIMS

[1](#)4. (SBU) According to the doctor in question, a man brought his son in for medical care but was told that he would have to go to a different facility because Samawah General Hospital does not treat children. As it turns out, the father is a member of the ISCI party and a close friend of Dhalimi; therefore, he called the PC Chair to request his assistance. Dhalimi came to the hospital where he, allegedly, argued with the doctor and became verbally abusive.

[1](#)5. (C) The doctor later filed charges, and a local judge issued an arrest warrant for the PC Chairman. The PRT Leader confirmed this with LTC Falih, Muthanna's Provincial Joint Operations Center (PJOC) commander.

POLITICS ENTERS THE FRAY

¶6. (SBU) It would not be unusual for the local Iraqi Police to ignore an arrest warrant of this sort; however, politics is entering the mix and breathing life into this seemingly minor incident. Hakim Khazal Khashan, Dhalimi's political rival and a recently censured PC member, reported to the PRT Leader that he will bring a Baghdad judge to Muthanna who will issue a new arrest warrant. In addition to the assault charges, Hakim claims to have hard evidence of corruption involving Dhalimi, though he did not share any details. Hakim stated that, after reviewing this evidence, a Baghdad judge has decided to travel to Muthanna to issue a warrant that the local police cannot ignore.

COMMENT

¶7. (S) It is election season in Muthanna, and the games have begun. The local courts would probably not sentence Dhalimi to jail time for the original minor offense, nor would a Baghdad judge travel to Muthanna without the prior approval of Chief Justice Medhat, so Hakim is sweetening the pot. It is unlikely Chief Justice Medhat would require a Baghdad judge to travel to Muthanna to satisfy a political purpose. One thing is clear, though, Hakim intends to use these events to publicly shame a bitter political rival, one who played a key role in orchestrating his recent censure from the provincial council (see Reftel). END COMMENT
CROCKER